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# How to Work Your Way Through College



BY  
**M. B. Andrews**  
1921



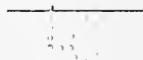




# How to Work Your Way Through College



*Melvin*  
BY  
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THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF GREENSBORO



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	PAGE
Frederick Archer, Superintendent Greensboro Schools	35
T. W. Bickett, Former Governor of North Carolina	36
C. E. Brewer, President of Meredith College	36
E. D. Broadhurst, Board of Education, Greensboro	37
E. C. Brooks, Superintendent Public Instruction	33
J. E. Calfee, President of Asheville Normal	38
J. S. Carr, Banker and Philanthropist, Durham	39
H. W. Chase, President of State University	34
P. P. Claxton, Former Commissioner of Education	32
J. H. Cook, North Carolina College	39
W. B. Cooper, Lieutenant-Governor	40
B. B. Dougherty, President Appalachian Training School	41
R. L. Flowers, Trinity College	42
W. A. Harper, President of Elon College	44
H. S. Hilley, Dean of Atlantic Christian College	44
M. T. Hinshaw, President of Rutherford College	44
C. H. Ireland, President of Odell Hardware Company	45
J. E. Latham, President of J. E. Latham Company	46
E. C. Lindeman, North Carolina College	46
W. J. Martin, President of Davidson College	50
L. S. Overman, United States Senator	51
J. C. Peery, President of Lenoir College	52
W. L. Poteat, President of Wake Forest College	53
E. D. Pusey, Superintendent Durham Schools	54
W. C. Riddick, President of State College, Raleigh	54
G. T. Rowe, Editor, "North Carolina Christian Advocate"	55
F. M. Simmons, United States Senator	56
S. B. Turrentine, President, Greensboro College	57
C. G. Vardell, President, Flora Macdonald College	57
L. A. Williams, University of North Carolina	58
J. N. Wills, Chairman, Board of Education, Greensboro	60
O. V. Woosley, Sunday-school Field Secretary	61
J. C. Wooten, Presiding Elder, North Carolina Conference	62

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. On the Highway .....	6
II. The Great Decision .....	8
III. A Test of Courage .....	9
IV. The Morning After .....	11
V. The Arithmetic of Life .....	13
VI. A College Freshman .....	15
VII. My First Vacation .....	17
VIII. Fog and Sunshine .....	19
IX. Nature: Human and Otherwise .....	21
X. Root, Hog, or Die .....	24
XI. Ticklish Business .....	25
XII. My Senior Year—and After .....	27
XIII. Your Move Now .....	30
XIV. Some Concrete Suggestions .....	31
XV. Men of Mark—and Their Message to You .....	32

## F O R E W O R D

Can a young man work his way through college? Is it wise for him to undertake the task? Can a young woman work her way through college? Is it wise for her to undertake the task?

The above are real questions that a large number of young people of both sexes have faced and will continue to face as long as poverty exists and education seems desirable.

It is with a good deal of hesitation that one offers to the general public any kind of autobiographical material that records experiences less momentous than those resulting from participation in the European debacle or the Paris Peace Conference. But agreeing with Wilson that it is perhaps never wise to take counsel of one's fears, I have decided to disregard my feeling of hesitancy and issue this little pamphlet.

The following pages contain both a straightforward story of the struggles I experienced in trying to work my way through Trinity College, Durham, North Carolina, and several strong letters of encouragement written by some of the ablest and most worthy citizens of our state. It is with the hope that this material may help some other young person in circumstances similar to mine—help that young person to resolve to secure a college education regardless of the cost—that I send this little book forth to the world.

THE AUTHOR.

## I

## ON THE HIGHWAY

The Reverend John C. Wooten met me at the forks of the roads in my life and, perhaps unconsciously to himself, directed me into the right way. Here are the facts:

At the age of fourteen, I entered school the first time. Several years previously, I had lost my mother. I was the fourth of eight living children.

At the age of sixteen, when I met up with Mr. Wooten, I knew how to read and cipher, and was ambitious for an education. But the odds were against me. Our family was a large one, and my father was about as poor as it is possible for a man to be; and, ambitious though he was for his children, he frequently stated that he did not even hope ever to be able to do more for us than to give each of us a high school education.

At the time I came into contact with Mr. Wooten, I was going to school, clerking in my father's small grocery store, preparing the firewood at home, and assisting in the preparation of the meals. But, personally, I had only one source of income: the treasurer of the Methodist church to which I belonged was paying me \$1.00 a week for my services as janitor.

Mr. Wooten, professor of Biblical Literature at Trinity College, was to deliver a sermon-address at our church as a part of our school commencement exercises. The house was crowded, and I suppose the address was a most eloquent one, though I do not remember a word of it. After the address, the preacher stood at the front door and shook hands with his hearers as they passed out.

Finally, all had gone except one boy: I was pausing behind in order that I might, as janitor, switch off the lights and lock the door. As I was reaching up to take hold of the switch, the preacher laid his hand on my shoulder and asked:

“Young man, what college are you attending?”

Naturally, it hurt my pride to have to answer, “I am not attending college; I have not finished school here yet.”

“Well, when you do finish, come up to Trinity,” he said, and was gone.

I am unable to understand it yet, but those words, spoken as they were and at the time they were, inspired me to go to Trinity College some day—and years later, I went.

## II

## THE GREAT DECISION

Mr. Wooten caused me to decide some day to enter Trinity College. But there is a vast deal of difference between deciding to do a thing and in deciding how to do it. For at least three years, the following question occupied a very prominent place in my mind:

“How am I going to get the money with which to pay my expenses while in Trinity College?”

I knew I was going; I knew where I was going; and I knew when I was going. But I did not know how I was going to get the money.

Let me be frank about this business. All of my time was taken, and practically every cent I earned was turned into the family treasury. Finally, one Sunday afternoon in the spring of 1909, I reached a great decision.

The weather being rainy, I was in my bedroom pondering over books and magazines. In some way, the idea was suggested to me that in the following year the United States government would have the census taken. The answer to my difficult question came to me like a flash: I would work my way through college by selling maps based on the 1910 census!

Perhaps the idea was suggested to me by a large map hanging on the wall of my room with North and South Carolina on one side and the United States on the other. This was based upon the census of 1900. Isn’t it strange that, though this map had been in my home nearly ten years, the idea of selling maps had never suggested itself to me before?

## III

## A TEST OF COURAGE

At last, my high school struggles had ended, and I was now prepared—on conditions, of course—to enter any standard college of North Carolina.

I had already stood with the other members of my class before the camera and had had my picture taken; I had prepared and delivered, in the most eloquent language at my command, something that I called my graduating oration, entitled "Industrial Co-operation." I had even gone up to Goldsboro and delivered my speech before a great mass of people who had assembled to attend the county commencement exercises.

I remember all of the thrills I experienced; I recall the pleasant words one of the judges said to me after I lost in the contest; and I remember how impossible it was for me to sleep that night; a million unfamiliar faces were before me.

Since I am trying to tell this story as it actually happened, I am going to say that the expense of that trip was paid with borrowed money and that the suit I wore belonged to one of my brothers. I was then twenty years old, a high school graduate, without a position, and with not a cent to my name.

For a few days, I worked at the store. Finally, on a Sunday night, I had a talk with my father. I told him that I had decided to strike out for myself that summer and try to earn some money with which to enter college.

My father was opposed to my plans. Of course he believed in education, and he told me that he wanted me to go to college. But he insisted from the first that I should not try to go off that fall. It was my duty, he urged, to stay with him and work at least one more year.

I appreciated his arguments, and I wanted to do what he said; but I could hardly help muttering the words of a Lad of another story, when he said to his chiding parents:

“Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”

I was desperate. Though I had always been, I think, an obedient son, I frankly told my father that I had come to the parting of the ways and that, in spite of his objections, I was determined to go to work for myself on the following morning. The last words my father said that night were these:

“If you fail to open the store tomorrow morning, this will be your last night under my roof. This is final—and I don’t want to hear another word from you.”

## IV

## THE MORNING AFTER

Surprise is a mild word to use in describing the way I felt when I woke up next morning. Instead of having been aroused at five o'clock as usual, I had been allowed to sleep until the sun was an hour high, and one of my brothers had been sent to the store. Neither my father nor I has until this day mentioned the conversation which passed between us on the Sunday night before.

So far as I remember, that is the first time my father ever made to me a promise of punishment that he did not keep. I have often wondered what process of thinking his mind went through in reaching the conclusion he reached. But I never felt quite free to ask him. This, however, I know: he did not give in because of my apparent stubbornness—he was too brave for that.

The chances are that, after he had hushed me up, his mind took him back to his childhood, to the days of his own great yearning for an education: he then understood, no doubt, perhaps better than he ever had before, just how his own yearning had carried over into the life of his child. I say this because of his nobility of character, and because I know that, while we children were growing up, he laid almost as much stress on the value of an education as he did on anything else—the motto of his life being, I think, purity of heart, industry in labor, and education.

After breakfast, I went down to the local hardware store, bought me a good hammer for which I promised to pay later, walked up to the package factory operated by the Mount Olive Manufacturing Company, and made application for a position as Irish potato barrel maker. Though I knew but little about this work, I was determined to make the best of it. Frequently I mashed my fingers, but soon I was doing reasonably well.

As a matter of fact, my ability to drive nails increased

so rapidly that, within two or three weeks, I was making from two to three dollars a day—as much as a good carpenter earned at that time.

I did another thing in that factory that I have always been proud of. I helped to popularize one particular piece of work on an Irish potato barrel that had always been unpopular among barrel makers. It consisted of what we called “putting in the inside bands.” Up until that time, two banders were needed for every barrel form; soon, only one bander was needed for each barrel form, but I am told that two are again needed now.

It was not unusual for some of the machinery to get broken or to get out of repair; so I generally took along in one of my overall pockets some book that I wanted to study. Yes, the boys tried to tease me about it at first; but, as I paid no attention to them, they soon learned to take my reading for granted, and said no more about it.

Often, while I was driving nails at a very rapid rate of speed, my mind was busy formulating plans for my future college career. I decided one day to write to President Few and tell him about my situation and ask him if he thought it possible for me to work my way through.

Doctor Few answered that he thought such a thing possible, informing me that he had turned my letter over to Mr. W. G. Matton, who was at that time secretary of the Greater Trinity Club. After learning from me that I knew something of bookkeeping, I having kept my father’s books while working in the store, he referred me to Mr. Robert F. Perry, manager of the Perry-Wood Company, prominent grocers of Durham.

After brief correspondence, Mr. Perry suggested that I go to see him, which I did. Within ten or fifteen minutes, he offered me a position as bookkeeper, requesting me to start to work at once.

This was about the second week in August, 1910. I went back home, boxed up some books and magazines, spent for clothes a good deal of the money I had earned making barrels and cantaloupe crates, rushed back to Durham, and went to work at \$42.50 a month.

## V

## THE ARITHMETIC OF LIFE

Life is like an arithmetic; it is full of perplexing problems. I thought when I decided years before to enter college after finishing high school, that perhaps the greatest problem in life had been solved. But that same question had to be faced once more even after I reached Durham in the summer of 1910.

I had gone to work as faithfully as I could with Mr. Perry and the other members of his concern. It may be that I had been working too faithfully, for about a week before college opened, Mr. Perry begged me to give up my idea of entering college that fall and sign a contract with him for a year. He argued that he would pay me enough to enable me to lay some money aside so that I could do my college work a year later without having to trouble myself about finances.

To be perfectly frank, his proposition appealed to me. For the life of me, I could not see how I was going to earn enough during my spare time to pay my expenses, and I could not see how I was going to have spare time enough to do much real work anyway. As a matter of fact, I came very near giving up during registration week.

The situation looked rather hopeless. I had been forced to give up a position that promised to pay me a good salary and, on the morning of the opening day, had gone up to the college for the opening exercises. Several of the pastors of the city spoke words of welcome to the new students, and a long string of announcements was made by President Few. The whole program lasted something less than two hours. During the entire day, I could not help thinking of how much I could have earned had I been working.

But Mr. Perry allowed me to continue my work during my spare time, for which he agreed to pay me \$25.00 a month. As things were then, I concluded that I could live; so I decided to make the best of the situation, work as hard as I could, and spend at least one year in college. Beyond that, I could not see—and I did not try to.

## VI

## A COLLEGE FRESHMAN

Within thirty days after I enrolled as a college freshman, I was getting along pretty well, as it seemed to me. By that time, my daily schedule had been worked out—a task that only a college freshman can really appreciate. My work at the store was moving along, and Mr. Perry seemed to be pleased. In short, though I felt somewhat overworked, I was really doing well, and I was thoroughly happy.

It may be worth while to state my daily program. I got up at seven o'clock, dressed quickly, rode a bicycle from Seeman Street in North Durham, to lower Mangum in central Durham, where I ate breakfast. From there I went to the college, where I was scheduled to be at 8:30 so as to attend chapel exercises. My last class closed at one o'clock; so I went from the college immediately back to Mangum Street for lunch.

By something like two-fifteen each day, I had walked a mile and a quarter, had eaten some lunch, and was at the office doing my work for the afternoon.

The store closed at six o'clock. After supper I always went immediately to the house, where I arrived around seven-fifteen, and went to work on my lessons. Twelve o'clock was supposed to be my regular bedtime, but I went to bed more often at one o'clock, or later, perhaps, than I did at twelve.

I used to wonder why the Great Teacher found it necessary to advise that we get the beams out of our own eyes before attempting to locate the motes in the eyes of others. But I think I know why now. Robert Burns used to say that man was made to mourn; and possibly he was, but it seems to me equally as true that man was made to walk blindly through this world.

Doctor Boyd called me aside one day and cautioned me about overwork and underexercise, and warned me that,

before I knew it, I might suffer a nervous breakdown. I hope I did not laugh in his face, but I certainly felt that he knew little of what he was talking about; I was as strong as an ox, I thought, and as tough as a plantation mule.

But the break came all too soon, and it was very nearly complete. I suffered from a severe attack of nervous indigestion. Whereas I had previously thought I could digest anything up to crushed rock and horseshoe nails, I really found out that I was unable to digest two grains of rice.

The old proverb says that one extreme follows another, and I believe it. Though I was as happy as Shelley's skylark a few days before, now I was hopelessly despondent. Had Job been living in my neighborhood, I am sure that he would have tried to cheer me up. I remember writing some such sentence as this in a private notebook I was keeping: "Whereas my future used to seem as bright as polished diamonds, now it seems as dark as an ocean of black ink at midnight when all the sky is covered over with a blanket of smutty clouds." I could think of just two things to do: recover my strength, or go home. To go home was unthinkable and impossible; for to do that was to admit failure, and it was infinitely harder to admit failure than to fail.

You can imagine the rest. I wrote to a thousand patent medicine houses, consulted several doctors, wrote to the State Board of Health, and drank in enough self-pity to kill an elephant.

One of the things that worried me was that the doctors I consulted did not seem to take me very seriously. They suggested that I be rather careful with my diet, that I exercise freely, and that I secure enough sleep—all of which seemed to be tame treatment for a man in my condition. But by following the advice given, I was soon all right again.

## VII

## MY FIRST VACATION

The end of my first year in college came all too soon. I had forty-five dollars when I went to Durham; and I had about five dollars when I got ready to leave. Giving up my position with Mr. Perry, I went home to spend the summer. I was badly worn, and my health was poor. I lay around home two or three weeks before recovering sufficient strength and courage to go to work.

I had thought a good deal about my work for the summer and had often wondered what to do. Of course I remembered my decision more than a year before to sell maps. But I knew nothing at all about selling maps, and I did not feel qualified to face the public.

I do not know yet why it was that I had such a strong indisposition to approach people. Perhaps it was partly due to my lack of training; and yet I had spent several years in my father's store and had come into contact with hundreds, if not thousands, of people. It may be that my reluctance was partly due to my physical condition, which was considerably below normal. Anyway, I almost felt that I had rather be burned alive than to go before the public with any kind of proposition—to say nothing of maps.

It was almost nine o'clock, and the sun was half way to the center of the heavens, when one of my classmates walked into my bedroom where I was sleeping and announced that he had come to get me to go out and sell maps with him! Dressing rapidly and eating a bite of breakfast, I went down to the store, and he and I drank a milkshake apiece. At ten-thirty, we turned our faces toward the country—map salesmen!

Would you believe it? Between that hour and sunset that day, he and I together took orders for twenty-three maps, and our profit on each sale was one dollar.

I never shall forget how our hearts throbbed as we approached our first customer; as we approached a brotherly farmer at the noon hour and asked that we might be taken in for dinner; and as we made application just about sunset for a bed in which to spend the night.

The details come back to me as clearly as if I had seen them all yesterday. The man with whom I took dinner was tall and skinny and the wife was short, stout, and jovial. She had recently returned from some hospital where she had undergone a serious operation.

Let me change the subject. It seems impossible that the walk should have cured my indigestion, but who could think of ailments before such a dinner? Cabbage stewed with country ham and corn meal dumplings; biscuits as large as a coffee cup, buttermilk, peach preserves, home-made pound cake, and huckleberry pie!

To make the story short, I cleared up approximately \$150.00 on maps, collected and published in book form about fifty of my own rhymes under the title of "A School Boy's Poems," and sold four hundred copies of the book at twenty-five cents a copy.

This is the story of what I accomplished during the summer following my first year in college.

## VIII

## FOG AND SUNSHINE

Sir Oliver Lodge and others are putting forth a desperate effort to get a vision into the other world, hoping to find out—to a certain extent, at least—what the future holds in store for man. But my private opinion is that the great Umpire of this universe made a wise decision when he ruled that “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard” what the future holds in store for any man.

I went back to college in the fall greatly rejuvenated in strength, high in hopes, and approximately one hundred dollars to my credit; and I went back to my same old position with Mr. Perry and his partners.

Within six weeks, some of the partners in the concern sold out, and one of the new stockholders took over my position. I immediately moved to the college; and to cut expenses, I made plans to do my own cooking and board myself.

My kitchen outfit consisted of a \$1.25 oil burner, a drinking glass, a bowl for cereals, a milk pitcher, salt, pepper, and sugar retainers, and two spoons. I bought me some toasted corn flakes, a twenty-two pound box of soda crackers, five pounds of sugar, half dozen cans of condensed milk, some oatmeal, and several cans of salmon; with these supplies I began boarding myself.

It was not long before the larger portion of my money was spent and my health was gone again; and, therefore, I felt like a lonesome fool.

But the clouds soon began to clear away. I secured a position in the office of the college as recorder of grades at twenty cents an hour; and I resolved to begin patronizing a respectable boarding house, whether I might ever be

able to secure an education and free myself of debt or not! And that was a wise move; for from that day forth I began to grow stronger physically and mentally—and began to go deeper and deeper into debt.

At Christmas I gave up my work in the office, and became an assistant to Mr. Breedlove as a clerk in the library. The spring of 1912 found me finishing the work of the sophomore class, with practically all of my conditions worked off, with fair health, and with \$250.00 worth of debts to my credit.

The summer was before me.

## IX

## NATURE: HUMAN AND OTHERWISE

If there is any one idea in life that I have clung to with a stronger grip than to any other, it is that, with the right sort of man, the will is and ought to be the controlling force in life. I cannot remember when I did not believe in that principle; and yet, circumstances wield a greater influence in the formation of character and in determining the work that one does than perhaps even the clearest thinkers realize.

The experience I had during my first vacation convinced me that I did not want to try to sell maps again; I had no desire to go on the road in an effort to sell anything. What could I do? I wanted to return to college in the fall—I was determined to return. Still I was \$250.00 in debt, was without a position, and had no other field of opportunity open to me. I simply had to sell maps—and I did it.

In a great many respects, my work was decidedly pleasant and successful. Locating in Smithfield, I immediately formed the acquaintance of some of the splendid people there. Hundreds of people bought maps from me. Indeed, my efforts as a salesman were so successful that I induced one of my brothers to work with me, and I cleared up approximately \$100.00 on the orders that he took alone.

Perhaps I should tell two or three of my experiences during that summer. One Saturday morning about nine o'clock, I walked into the office of the superintendent of one of the local cotton mills. Within five minutes I had taken his order for a map. Feeling encouraged, I asked him for permission to go into the spinning room and present my proposition to each of the workers, and he very kindly gave his consent. By about twelve o'clock my orders had run up to thirteen; my commission now being \$1.28 on each sale, you can easily see how well I succeeded.

That afternoon, after dinner, I put on my best clothes and loafed around the old town pump. While standing there observing the Saturday afternoon throng, I saw a man and woman approaching me, and I heard her say:

“There he is now.” Picture it—think of it! The woman stepped up to me and said:

“I want one of those maps, too. You took an order from every one of the men in the factory, but you failed to say a word to a single one of us women. I am a widow and have a little boy in school; and I am just as anxious for my boy to have a map as any man is for his boy to have one.”

Would you believe it? I took her order for one.

Let me tell another experience. I had walked several miles out into the country, taking orders as I went along. About 9:30 one morning, I met up with a big force of men who were repairing the public road. Calling the overseer aside, I took his order almost immediately; I then asked that he allow me to present my proposition to the men working with him. He asked them to lay their tools down, told them to draw up close to me, and listen to what I had to say.

Acting, I imagine, somewhat like an evangelist conducting a meeting, I painted the picture of my map in glowing colors, and then asked each man who wanted one to hold up his hand. Just at the right moment, the overseer came to my assistance in these words:

“Boys, what he says sounds like the truth to me; I have decided to take one, and I believe each of you will be glad to have one in your home.”

When night came I counted up and found that I had taken twenty-six orders that day.

Perhaps I ought to tell one experience of a different nature.

Like “B’r. Rabbit” in the “Uncle Remus” stories, I stopped for the night where night happened to take me.

A rather old farmhouse was sitting back from the road in a big oak grove. Soon after supper the two small boys were sent to bed, and the grown young woman in the home—an orphan, who had been adopted years before—received company.

Being tired and uninterested, I went to my room, which was right next to the front porch. Well, I had heard of "billing and cooing" for a long time, but I had never heard the like before.

The moon was shining in all of its beauty; the beetles were singing in the tops of the trees; and the young man and the young woman, behind the trailing vines on the front porch, were making noises familiar no doubt to all of the young people of the race.

After a while, I went to bed, but not to sleep; I will let you guess why. It was no use; I couldn't sleep. The only thing that I could do was to listen to the beetles and to the couple on the porch. It was a dreary night, one of the longest and most uncomfortable I have ever spent. The sun was up next morning before I finally, lying on the floor, dropped off to sleep for about a half hour. What became of the couple, I do not know; but I would bet a man they married!

At the opening of college in the fall, I had paid my debts, and was about \$150.00 ahead.

## X

## “ROOT, HOG, OR DIE”

Perhaps I should explain that the work I did in the library during one-half of my sophomore year, all of my junior year, and all of my senior year, did not pay me a cent in actual cash. I worked ten hours a week, at twenty cents an hour; and the amount earned was credited on my expenses with the college. As I lived comfortably, it is easy to understand that I went rather deeply into debt. Though I do not think that I was extravagant in a single thing, I owed approximately \$350.00 at the end of my junior year.

The members of the college faculty with whom I became intimately acquainted were very friendly to me. They helped me in more ways than I can mention. I never shall forget a letter President Few wrote me during my freshman year in which he spoke of my struggles in some such language as this: “I fully sympathize with you in the praiseworthy efforts you are putting forth to finance your own way through college.” Also, the folks at home co-operated with me heartily. They boosted me in their letters, signed several notes with me, and did everything else they could to help me along. Yet, with it all, the conviction grew stronger and stronger upon me that the unknown writer was right when he said:

“Root, hog, or die.”

## X I

## TICKLISH BUSINESS

By the end of my junior year, my destiny was fixed; it was almost impossible even to think of doing anything else but to sell maps.

I spent the summer in Person County, making Roxboro my headquarters. On the whole, my efforts were rather successful; but I became painfully despondent at times. It was somewhat more difficult to make deliveries in Person County than it had been in the other counties where I had worked. Then, too, I was rather heavily in debt.

When I reached Roxboro, I had less than \$3.00 to my name, and I did not know a soul there. In some way, my courage nearly failed me in the very outset. I even spent three or four days in my room at the boarding house writing melancholy verses before I went out and tried to take an order. I dreaded to start—dreaded it with a dread far more intense than the chap feels who, having prepared himself to go swimming in the early spring, has dipped his toes into the water and found it painfully cold.

When I received the card from the express office notifying me that my first shipment of maps had arrived, collect on delivery, for \$70.00 and express charges, I had, as I remember it, nineteen cents in my pocket—and not another cent anywhere else in the world. What did I do? What would you have done? I had taken a good many orders and had notified my customers as to my proposed deliveries, but I could not make the deliveries without the maps. How to get them—that was the question.

I simply wrote a check on one of the banks at home, asked a young business man, who was boarding where I was, to cash it for me, took my maps from the express office, delivered them, deposited the money in a Roxboro bank, and sent home

a check for deposit covering the amount of my bogus check. That was rather ticklish business, but it worked.

Toward the end of the summer, I could see that my net profits were going to amount to a little more than \$200.00 and that, therefore, I was going to have to return to college with at least \$150.00 worth of debts still unpaid. Perhaps it was unworthy of me, but some strange and unpleasant thoughts passed and repassed through my mind.

I never shall forget one experience. I had worked as hard as I could trying to make deliveries. But several of my customers had turned me down, and some few I could not find. Late in the afternoon, a heavy rain and thunderstorm came up rather quickly. Driving my horse at pretty high speed, I dashed into a neighbourly looking yard, and backed the buggy under a shelter; the horse was in the rain.

The wind blew with great fierceness, twisting the fruit trees in the orchard before me until many of the branches were broken off; the rain poured down in drops as large as small marbles; and the lightning and thunder flashed and roared with an intensity I have never seen or heard equalled. Of course it was unworthy of me, but during that storm, I almost secretly wished that a flash of lightning might end it all.

## XII

## MY SENIOR YEAR—AND AFTER

When I returned to college in the fall following the vacation after my junior year, I was almost in sight of the goal I had set for myself years before.

Though I had entered college in the fall of 1910 poorly prepared in all subjects and conditioned on modern languages and Latin, I was ambitious to graduate with honors; to win the orator's medal from the Columbia Literary Society; and to be elected president of the society.

I cannot recall who inspired me to the ambition to graduate with honors, but I do remember the man of my class who caused me to set my heart upon winning the orator's medal. He met me in my room one afternoon during the latter part of my junior year and requested me to enter the race. I told him that I had already given considerable thought to the matter, but that I had about decided not to undertake it, being rather certain that I could not possibly win.

"Davis, I can't win the blooming thing, and it is useless to try."

"What's the reason you can't?" he urged.

"You know why, Davis; my middle name is failure. I wanted the freshman debater's medal, but you got that. I studied for six weeks and then sat up all night and worked for the set of Shakespeare offered to the best sophomore debater, and you know who got that. 'Tubby' Boyd flunked me on my fall history; I lost out week before last in the inter-society debate preliminary; Shelton made first place over me in the 'International Peace' contest; and I have been told that two dozen of the boys are going to try for the orator's medal; so, what's the use?"

"Andrews, you make me sick. Let them try; but you can win if you will do it. What difference does it make if

you did lose in those other contests? The experience you gained is what counts.

"I will admit that the scout who won the set of Shakespere might possibly beat you if he'd try—I agree with you that he is the strongest speaker in our class. But he won't do it—he's too blamed lazy."

"Well," I agreed, after two hours of that kind of talk from Davis, "I'll do my best."

When college opened in the fall, there were, I think, fifteen of us in the race for the medal; but I feared only one of my opponents. As for him, I knew he could win if he would, but I thought he might not try hard enough. During the first six months, he spoke practically every time I did, and he made a better impression each time than I did. But before much longer, he began to appear more seldom, and several of the other boys finally dropped out of the race.

During the course of the year, my ambition to be elected president of the society was realized. Being in office when the year closed, it fell to my lot to instruct the treasurer to pay for the gold orator's medal that had been awarded to me by a vote of thirteen out of fifteen of the judges!

I acted as literary editor of the college magazine, "The Archive," during my senior year; and on commencement day, to my great satisfaction, my name was printed on the program along with the others who had been allowed to graduate with honors.

The following morning I took an inventory of my possessions:

College diploma, a Bible, a gold medal, poor health, no position, and a debt of \$750.00.

No matter how I should have felt, I felt somewhat relieved, rather tired and baffled, humble in spirit, and in doubt as to my future career.

Not many days thereafter, I secured a position as a school teacher at a salary of \$92.50 a month, and I have been teaching ever since.

Today, my health is good; my salary is reasonable; I am proud of my position; I am told that I have a good reputation as a school man; and I have a family of my own—a faithful wife and two of the most delightful boys anyone ever saw!

Has it been worth while? Yes, and a thousand times over. If I could retrace my steps, I would do as I did—only, I would be more careful as to my health.

## XIII

## YOUR MOVE, NOW

You will have to decide for yourself whether or not to try to work your way through college. Here are some of the factors involved:

1. *Desire*.—To succeed, you will have to want a college education more than you want anything else in the world.
2. *Willingness*.—You will have to be willing to pay the full price, no matter how much it may cost.
3. *Initiative*.—You will have to possess initiative; that is, after deciding to go, you will have to go—to decide is not enough.
4. *Perseverance*.—If you start, you will have to have the courage, the energy, and the patience to keep going, regardless of difficulties.

## XIV

## SOME CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS

I myself have known men to pay their way through college in nearly all of the following ways:

Borrow the money and pay it back after graduation; run a college pressing club; act as an agent for a laundry; wait on a table; work in some office; work in the library; run a confectionary stand; act as postmaster; work in some of the retail stores down town; act as musician in a moving picture show; clerk in a hotel; take subscriptions for magazines and other publications; write for newspapers; sell maps, Bibles, and other books during the vacations; do stenographic work and typewriting; coach preparatory students; and act as business manager for one or more of the college publications.

If you really mean business, select the method of your choice; work out your plans with earnestness; go at it; and do not stop until you finish.

Instead of being a disgrace, it is an honor to a man to work his way through college. Men who have done this are in practically every walk of life in this country to-day.

Dr. P. P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education of the United States, is one of this number; and there are thousands of others less prominent who have done as he has.

“Let’s go.”

## Men of Mark and their Message to You

Just a word.

The messages in the following pages are so true, so clear, and so helpful that, to me, it seems impossible for any sane young person to read them without being inspired and encouraged.

The writers have digged down into their hearts and lives in an effort to give to you the benefit of their experiences, and each one has done this "without money and without price."

So let me take this occasion to thank the men whose messages you now have the privilege of reading for co-operating with me so heartily in this enterprise; and let me, also, thank the others who have been so kind as to encourage me to prepare and publish this little book.

M. B. ANDREWS.

May 21, 1921.

### DR. P. P. CLAXTON

Dr. P. P. Claxton, former National Commissioner of Education, expresses his sentiments thus:

"I am glad to know that you are getting together material to encourage boys and girls in school to go to college, although they may not have immediately in hand the means to pay their way through college.

"I did not work my way through college, although I started with only \$37.50 and had an indebtedness of only \$500.00 when I was through. The only money I actually made in college was by ringing the bell during half the time in my senior year, for which I was paid \$10.00 for five months.

"I am, however, definitely of the opinion that any energetic boy or girl who is willing to take advantage of opportunities that offer can easily make his or her way through college by working while at college or during the vacations, or

by borrowing whatever money may be necessary and paying it back after getting through college. Almost any person who is willing to work can get help in this last way."

Washington City,  
March 28, 1921.

### DR. E. C. BROOKS

Dr. E. C. Brooks, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Raleigh, says:

"All young people should realize this fact, that every man is self-made; that is, every one must use such opportunities as are available in developing his own intellectual, moral, and material power. This is work. One may grow strong and very useful by acquiring knowledge through books and using this properly; others, by learning from contact with people and working strenuously with people. But in the last analysis, all power is the result of hard work. Students in college, therefore, who are compelled to support themselves wholly or in part while taking advantage of the opportunities of a college education may be developing as much capacity as those who are more fortunate in being able to defray their daily expenses without having to perform work of this kind. In fact, it is frequently the case that the former will secure the advantage over the latter because of the better habits formed.

"No student, therefore, should be ashamed of the amount of work necessary to defray his expenses, for this gives only another opportunity to increase one's capacity in a little different way. We have only to study the biography of the number of men who supported themselves while in college and who have succeeded so greatly since leaving college. The secret of this success is found in the aim of the student and the habits of work formed while seeking to attain that aim. If we keep in mind that every man is self-made, we shall have greater respect for the legitimate means used by each individual in the making of himself."

Raleigh, North Carolina,  
May 17, 1921.

## DR. H. W. CHASE

Dr. H. W. Chase, President of the University of North Carolina, says in part:

"In reply to your letter of March fifteenth, it seems to me that your plan of issuing a booklet outlining some of the ways by which a man may work his way through college is an excellent one, and I am in hearty sympathy with its purpose.

"I doubt whether young men as a rule realize the many possibilities which are open in most of our institutions for students who want to work their way. There is to my mind no reason why a young man in good health and with a good amount of determination and foresight cannot go through college on his own resources. I have known so many cases in which men have done this, and have come through at the end not only with a good education, but with the discipline resulting from application and industry, and with the hearty respect and admiration of their fellows, that I have come to think of working one's way through college not so much as a last resort as really a very valuable educational experience.

"To any young man who really wants a college education and feels that he has within him the ability to 'stick to his guns' in spite of discouragements, I would say, 'Go ahead, by all means. You will come out of college at the end with an experience that will be of value to you all of your life. Do not be afraid that you will be under any handicap in your relations with your fellows. So far from discriminating against you because you are working your way, they will honor you for the fine purpose that you are showing.'

"I am sending you herewith a statement of some of the methods by which men earn their way at the University, and also a typical statement of a student's career who has worked his way through college."

Chapel Hill, North Carolina,

March 17, 1921.

## PROFESSOR FREDERICK ARCHER

Professor Frederick Archer, Superintendent of the Public Schools, Greensboro, writes:

"I have just finished reading the manuscript of 'How to Work Your Way Through College,' and want to congratulate you on the straightforwardness of the narrative as well as the achievement recorded therein. I sincerely trust that this will be printed in pamphlet form, and will have the wide distribution throughout the state that, because of purpose and content, it deserves. It seems to me that a young man has few achievements that he can take a greater pride in than that of working his way through college, and I am confident that no boy, whatever his circumstances may be, can have a worthier ambition.

"I believe that the citizenship of North Carolina most heartily approves of higher education; I believe that the average parent whom one meets is determined that his boy or girl shall have every help possible and necessary to the securing of a college education. But I believe also that it is worth while for us to make the attempt to instill into the minds of boys and girls of school age that this same North Carolina public regards most highly the college student who modestly but fearlessly confesses to the determination that he is working his way, and this same public has scant regard for the boy or girl who is attending a college, and is not only wasting his own time and the money of his parents, but is taking the place of a more worthy student who yearns for his opportunity.

"A college education is, in my mind, no warrant that one's life after college will be successful; but I have yet to see any college graduate who worked his way through, who is anything other than a most successful citizen, and at the same time a most useful one.

"I sincerely trust that this pamphlet of yours will play a great part in inducing a larger number of our boys and girls rightly to resolve that 'principalities nor powers nor

things present nor things to come' shall interfere with the attainment of this worthy ambition."

Greensboro, North Carolina,

April 4, 1921.

### HONORABLE T. W. BICKETT

The Honorable T. W. Bickett, former Governor of North Carolina, sends this message:

"One message I would send to the youth of the state is that reliability is the greatest single asset any man can have. It should be the ambition of every young man to have the people who know him best say of him:

"'He is thoroughly reliable. If he says a thing, you can bank on its accuracy; if he promises anything, you can count on its performance.'

"Such a reputation will always pay dividends, not only in earning power, but also in that peace of mind that is bottomed on self-respect."

Raleigh, North Carolina,

April 26, 1921.

### DR. CHARLES E. BREWER

Dr. Charles E. Brewer, President of Meredith College, Raleigh, sent a cheering message:

"In reply to yours of the 26th, let me commend you for the interest that you show in the matter of making suggestions to students about providing the means for their education.

"I did not work my way through college because my parents lived in a college town. I did work my way through high school, however, running errands for the principal, cutting his wood and carrying it in, and working the garden.

"At Meredith College we have opportunities for paying part of the expenses by helping in the dining room. For example, as much as \$90.00 a year may be saved in the cost of board. There are a number of positions also open to the

students to render assistance in several other ways in the institution, thus enabling them to meet other portions of their expenses here.

"One of the most valuable ways in which we can be of assistance is to provide a small loan in cash that enables students to tide over the hard places.

"I am greatly interested in the proposition that you are making and shall be glad to know of the results."

Raleigh, North Carolina,

March 30, 1921.

### ATTORNEY E. D. BROADHURST

Attorney E. D. Broadhurst, of the Board of Education, Greensboro, sends this message:

"To the boy who really wants a college education:

"You can—there is little sense in saying you cannot 'go off' to college—if you really want to go. In truth, your father and mother will have done more than the average part when they tell you frankly that they can get along with the family expense account without your effort to help. It does not take money in pocket for a real boy to get a college education; but it does take—

"First, self-sacrificing parents who are not too 'sot' in their ways to dream dreams along with their real boy—parents able in spirit to look their real boy in the eye and say: 'Go ahead, my boy, and fight your way out and over your present financial handicaps. We will get on without your help till you get a college education. Go to college, work, and remember: work and character are bound to win—the combination is scarce. We're betting on you! We're praying for you.'

"Second, it takes a real boy with nerve, zeal, ambition, to rise in spite of present handicaps and in spite of any future handicaps that may dare cross the path of his ambition.

"Third, it takes a real boy, ready, willing, and anxious to work—work at anything—just so it be honest work. That kind of fellow will recognize a job as waiter in the dining room or dishwasher in the college kitchen, wood cutter on the college ground, fireman in the furnace room, printer in the college printing shop, errand boy about the college, clerk in the village store, or watchman about the college, as a real opportunity at a real crisis in a real boy's life, and he will grab it, 'hook, sinker, line, and all!' In after life, he will glory in his self-sacrificing parents and wonder at his own nerve and resourcefulness at that early period of his life.

"Generally speaking, the self-sacrificing parents are ready to sacrifice; the college is ready to receive, encourage, counsel, the boy—I mean the real boy; the ordinary 'ne'er-do-well' boy would do well to stay home—I do not know that a college is the place for him. The atmosphere about a college will generally sprout a fool about as quickly as it will sprout a man, so be careful; do not go unless you are a real boy.

"Are you the boy—the real, nervy boy? If so, get up, get out, and go to it—the opportunity is waiting just a moment. Soon you will be too old; the boyish ambition you now have will, in a while, settle, and some other real boy will put on the college waiter's apron that was waiting for you and work out a college education to serve him and his state in a generation made poorer by your lack of a college education."

Greensboro, North Carolina,

April 16, 1921.

### DR. JOHN E. CALFEE

Dr. John E. Calfee, President of the Asheville Normal and Associated Schools, writes:

"Yes, I worked my way through college, and am glad that I did. In addition to working three hours a day and going to school, I managed to squeeze in two inter-society and two inter-collegiate debates; served as president of my society one term; served as assistant editor of the college

paper for one year and edited it another. Any boy with sound body, mental capacity, and ambition, can work his way through college. The boy who does not comes mighty near being a fool. The education that one works for tastes better than any other kind. With scarcely an exception, it means success in later life."

Asheville, North Carolina,  
March 21, 1921.

### GENERAL JULIAN S. CARR

General Julian S. Carr, banker and philanthropist, Durham, says:

"Education is the Damascus blade that cuts the Gordian knot of the world's great problems. He is to be pitied who is found shackled in ignorance by reason of the fact that he has failed to equip himself with an education. No sacrifice is too great to provide such a necessary accomplishment. Solomon never wrote a truer proverb than this:

" 'Knowledge is power.' "

Durham, North Carolina,  
April 29, 1921.

### PROFESSOR J. H. COOK

Professor J. H. Cook, of the North Carolina College for Women and Director of the Summer School, Greensboro, writes:

"Somehow or other, one always obtains the real necessities of life. To the ambitious, capable, earnest-minded young person in this progressive age, a college education is a necessity. Every year increases the complexity of our moral and economic problems. The environment will overcome our hero, thus revealing a tragedy, or our hero will understand and master his environment, thus enabling his friends to witness a triumph.

“An ordinary education enabled many who are winning to-day to win in life because this education was above the average of those with whom they competed. An education no better will surely foretell the failure of their children because educational standards have risen above the average of the older day. Adequate preparation in light of tomorrow’s standard is the price all must pay for success.

“Success in any new business can be predicted by one’s success in his old business. The business of a young person is that of securing an education that will enter him into life with every obtainable advantage. The outward mark of success in education is no less a distinction than that conferred by a college diploma. Success in this augurs success in both making a living and living a life. Those who overcome the financial difficulties of going through college will have already recommended themselves to successful men and women. You are, therefore, getting into the habit of success.

“A college education is worth what is put into it. Wisdom and the spirit of work are indispensable to all who succeed. Happy is the young person who has to work his way through college, thereby acquiring these two qualities simultaneously.

“ ‘Couldst thou in vision see thyself the man God meant,  
Thou never more wouldest be the man thou art, content.’ ”  
Greensboro, North Carolina,  
May 18, 1921.

### LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR W. B. COOPER

Lieutenant-Governor W. B. Cooper, of the State of North Carolina, Raleigh, says:

“Your letter of April 19 is appreciated, and I agree with you that it is always inspiring to one young man to know the struggles that his friends and acquaintances went through. I do not know that I have any special advice to give, but if so, I would say to young men: ‘Stick to the job, it matters not what the difficulties are.’ The world, and especially the

good people in the world, are always ready to help the boy who helps himself. As soon as a young man has finished his education and secures a position, I would say, 'Save a little, by all means.'

"When I came to Wilmington from the country, before I was twenty-one, my salary was \$26.00 a month (and more than I was worth at that time); but when the fall of the year came along, the salary advanced to \$35.00 a month; and I proceeded to save a little, and that little, from time to time, helped me to enter business on my account when the proper time came.

"May I wish you every success in your undertaking?"

Wilmington, North Carolina,

April 21, 1921.

### PROFESSOR B. B. DOUGHERTY

Professor B. B. Dougherty, President of the Appalachian Training School, of Boone, says:

"Poverty is no hindrance to the youth that wishes to become great. It is far better for a young man to fight his own battles and win his own victories. By so doing, he develops strength as well as confidence in himself, and wins the admiration of the people. On the other hand, a young man that must be supported from home cannot have much confidence in himself, will be weaker the day he graduates from college, and will lack the buoyant force necessary to success that comes from the people. However hard it may at first seem, it is far better for a young man to be pushed out upon his own resources at the beginning and earn his support, than to be fed by a bounteous hand from a silver spoon.

"Every young man in North Carolina today should be thankful that he lives in this age, in this great progressive state. There was one time in the history of man when the common boy, so to speak, was not considered worthy of an education. Human society was fixed like the strata of rock

in the mountains. As it is impossible for one stratum to rise above another, so it was impossible for a young man to rise above that position in life in which his birth had placed him. If he were the son of a king, he would be king at his father's death; but if he were a slave, he must remain a slave and be sold with the farm upon which he was born. Here in this good old state of ours, society may be compared to the waters of the ocean; that which scrubs the bottom to-day may ride tomorrow upon the highest wave. This old mother state loves every one of her children. She teaches them health, morality, industry, and economy, and daily points out to our young men the well graded road leading from every doorway through the public school, the high school, and the university.

“Though born in a hovel, under a board roof, if a young North Carolinian develops a strong body, establishes a good character, is courteous to all people, willing to work, earning at first more than he receives, he may climb the ladder of life, step by step, round by round, until he reaches the highest position in the gift of our people. Every young man is largely the architect of his own life; whatever he wills, he may do.”

Boone, North Carolina,

April 21, 1921.

### PROFESSOR R. L. FLOWERS

Professor R. L. Flowers, Secretary to the Corporation, Trinity College, Durham, writes, with a few omissions, as follows:

“As a rule, a young man who does not get a college education because he does not see the way does not really want it bad enough. In other words, he is not willing to pay the price. Many of the men who have achieved success have had hard struggles to prepare themselves for their life's work, but the very struggle itself has very probably been the deciding factor in their success.

"I remember a young man who had made up his mind that he was going to Trinity College. After the record of his preparatory work had been examined, he was told that his preparation was deficient and that he could not be admitted. A few days before the opening, he came into my office, and I asked him if he had not received word that he could not enter. He said, 'Yes, I got the letter, but I am up here, and I am going to stay. If I cannot get into college, I am going to Trinity Park and stay there until I am ready. I have seventeen dollars. This is all I have, and I see no chance of getting any more.'

"He was told that he must go to Trinity Park, and he said, 'All right.' He made his appeal to the headmaster, and he aided the young man in getting a position, letting him go to work within a few hours. He stayed at Trinity Park for two years, and made all his expenses. He then entered Trinity College and four years later received his degree. When he left college, he had more money than when he entered. This is a story that could be told of scores and scores of young men.

"I think I have never known many instances where a young man could not get work of some kind if he tried hard enough to get it. He seldom asks for aid in getting work, but goes out and finds it for himself. If a man has the courage and determination that will carry him through the first year in college, the remainder of his college course will be much easier. There are many ways by which college students may make money in vacations. I have known many college students who have been able to make enough in the summer vacations to pay the entire expenses of the succeeding year.

"The whole question is whether or not a young man has definitely made up his mind that he is going to get a college education. If this question is settled, the hardest part of the task has been completed. Scores and hundreds of useful and successful men, like the author of this volume, can verify the truth of this statement."

Durham, North Carolina,

May 9, 1921.

### DR. W. A. HARPER

Dr. W. A. Harper, President of Elon College, says, in part:

"I did not work my way through college, though I did through the university, and so I hesitate to give you the facts in regard to myself.

"Our students here help earn their expenses by waiting on the tables, helping in the administrative offices of the college, as assistant librarians, as assistants in the power house, about the campus, and as janitors. Quite a number of them support themselves in this way every year. They always make good in their studies, too."

Elon College, North Carolina,

March 18, 1921.

### DR. H. S. HILLEY

Dr. H. S. Hilley, Dean of the Atlantic Christian College, Wilson, says:

"From my own experience and as a result of my observation in the cases of other students, it seems to me that working one's way through college is largely a matter of will—the will to dare to begin and the will to go at anything that offers a chance to earn an honest dollar. In my opinion, any student who really wants to get a college education can do so by his own efforts during the school year and during the vacation periods. If a boy has some training, he may earn his way in a shorter time. But even the unskilled at any particular work can always find the odd job that will pay him."

Wilson, North Carolina,

April 18, 1921.

### PROFESSOR M. T. HINSHAW

Professor M. T. Hinshaw, President of Rutherford College, says:

"I am always glad to testify to the fact that I worked my way through school. Not only am I glad that I worked my way through school, but I am glad that I worked my way through ditches, corn field, and harvest field. I well remember cutting wheat with an old-fashioned sickle eleven days in succession just after coming out of school. It was the fastest way I had to get money to pay some bills; so I pushed ahead along with other hired men until it seemed that my shoulders would pull loose. I am not proud of this fact merely for the opportunity of relating it, but I attribute the fact of having done a few things that other men have failed to do to the habit of work and endurance acquired this way.

"Since leaving school myself, I have been connected with an institution that affords me an unusual opportunity to observe men and boys who are working to pay their way through school. From fifty to seventy-five of the two hundred and fifty students enrolled at Rutherford College work to pay a part or all of their expenses. I attribute the fine spirit of work and earnestness of our students very largely to this fact. In most instances, the day comes when a student is proud of the fact that he had to make his own way while at school."

Rutherford College, North Carolina,  
April 18, 1921.

### MR. CHARLES H. IRELAND

Mr. Charles H. Ireland, President of the Odell Hardware Company, Greensboro, says:

"This is the greatest day of opportunity to the young man who has ambition. There are more avenues of opportunity than ever before in the history of time. This is no day for the slacker or slothful man. As to the equipment necessary, there are just three requisites:

*"Ideal.*—You hardly ever reach any place unless you know just where you are starting for.

*“Industry.*—There is no such thing as luck or pull in this day and time. All the alloy has been extracted. Pure metal is currency of the realm. It will be recognized whenever shown. No talent is ever so effective as hard work. Efficiency is what is demanded. There is only one channel through which it flows—work.

*“Patience.*—We are running everything so rapidly these days that we do not give time for fruit to ripen, but pluck it before it has had time in which to store up the juices that render it palatable, with the result that most people are like shipped fruit—green, insipid, or stale. The great business world knows a well-developed character as readily as it does an apple. Any boy in North Carolina can attain any height he may aspire to if he will determine what he wants, is willing to work for it, and will be patient enough to work while he waits for his name to be placed on the roll call of those who can do one thing well.”

Greensboro, North Carolina,

April 9, 1921.

### MR. J. E. LATHAM

Mr. J. E. Latham, President of the J. E. Latham Company, realtors, Greensboro, says much in a few simple words:

“It was not my privilege to go to college, and the lack of college training, education, and association has been a great and constant handicap in my struggles for achievement. Let me say to any young man, whether he be rich or poor, that a college education is an essential thing and worth any price that has to be paid, whether the pay is in labor or money.”

Greensboro, North Carolina,

April 11, 1921.

### DR. E. C. LINDEMAN

Dr. E. C. Lindeman, Professor of Sociology, North Carolina College for Women, Greensboro, tells this gripping story:

"I began my college course at the age of twenty-one. My only previous educational experience was in a small parochial school which I left at the age of ten. Both of my parents died at about that time, and I was obliged to begin working for a living. I worked at various trades and occupations during the intervening ten years, and in my spare time I attempted to learn the English language. A few very kind friends assisted me in my awkward efforts, but the trade which I learned, namely, shipbuilding, made such demands upon my strength that I made very little progress.

"In spite of my handicaps, I was possessed with an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, and the hope that I might some day secure an education never entirely disappeared. During the summer months I usually worked on farms, since I loved the open and had inherited a strong rural inclination from my father, who was an experienced shepherd in Denmark. It was on an Ohio farm that I was inspired to begin college. The 'boss' of the threshing crew with which I was working appeared to take an interest in me. One night as we all sat about the orchard after the day's work was done, he came over to me and started talking about agricultural colleges. The mental struggles which I passed through after he had planted within me the hope of an education are still vivid in my memory. That fall I went back to my work in the shipyard.

"In the meantime I had laboriously read every page of the catalogue of the agricultural college of my native State of Michigan. To the great surprise of my fellow workers and to myself as well, I suddenly made a bold decision. College was to open late in September, and I announced one day to my associates at the lunch hour that I was going to college. At first they greeted my announcement with laughter, and finally with scorn. But I started off on the day that the catalogue said the students were to register. I had accumulated eighty dollars; and although I knew little of a college or its expenses, it seemed to me that this was sufficient to make a beginning. By the time that my departure arrived, my companions were reconciled to my leaving my trade, and one of the finest mem-

ories of my life is the small group of hardened riveters, caulkers, reamers, et cetera—hardened but powerful personalities—wishing me luck as I laid down my tools and started on the adventure which they could not understand. I have never seen one of that old group again, and this I count to be one of the losses or sacrifices which education entails.

“But, alas! My hopes were soon crushed. Upon making application for admittance to the college, I was informed that I could not enter because I had no high school credits. There was a state law, however, which made it compulsory for this particular college to allow students to enter who had been born in the state and had reached the age of twenty-one. However, the president politely but firmly informed me that it would be a waste of my money to enter; at that time he also knew that I did not even have an elementary school education.

“Somehow or other I shall never quite recover from that shock. I had thought that any one who really wanted an education could get one; but here I was confronted with such obstacles as ‘credits,’ and I did not even know the meaning of the term. My first inclination was to go back to my trade and my old companions of the shipyard. But this I could not do; a certain pride made it impossible for me to face those men who knew me so well. They were a courageous lot, and to face them with an admission of failure was a thought unbearable.

“It was golden autumn, and in my depressed mood I strolled out upon the college campus and from there over the college farm; there I saw some workers cutting and shocking corn. As I watched this scene and thought of the happy, care-free groups of students strolling or lounging about the campus, I was seized with the impulse to get a ‘job’ on this farm and at least live in the environment of the college. It seemed to me that this would in some measure satisfy my pride, and perhaps it might provide the opportunity for study in the college library. The very next morning I was at work in this same corn field. And, alas,

again, that very day I lost my pocketbook with what remained of my eighty dollars!

"The foreman of the college farm took an interest in me and at the close of two weeks convinced the president that I ought to be given a 'chance.' After much consultation and rising and falling hopes, I finally matriculated as a preparatory student in the agricultural course. I still shudder when I recall those first few months of study. I lived in a farm home about one mile from the college, and frequently the kind mother of this home knocked at my back room door to tell me that I ought to go to bed. There were many nights when the only sleep which came to me was that of sheer fatigue. It was not merely that I was obliged to study such subjects as algebra (a name which I had not heard before), but there was, in addition, the necessity of securing an income to pay my living expenses. At that time there was not a single person in the sphere of my acquaintance who cared whether I was educated or not; moreover, there was considerable objection on the part of a few relatives.

"Fortunately, as is always true, there were kindly hearts who saw into my difficulties. The farmer allowed me to do chores about the farm for my lodging; the foreman of the college dairy herd employed me to care for forty head of Holstein cows; one of the professors gave me work as janitor in the veterinary building.

"How thankful I am that I possessed a sturdy physique. To rise at four in the morning to take care of the cattle and to finish cleaning up the veterinary building at nine or ten at night, was, in addition to my intense struggles with new studies, a strain which called for all the reserve that my ten years of hard work had built into my body. However, the studies gradually grew less burdensome, and as I oriented myself to the new life, I learned methods of economizing my time.

"That first year of college was not creditable from the scholarship standpoint. I failed in algebra and received very low marks in other studies. An English teacher gave me my only ray of encouragement; my experiences in life,

coupled with a very lively imagination, made it possible for me to write essays which seemed to please her. There came a red letter day! On a returned theme was this sentence, written in red ink: 'Your essay was an oasis in the desert.' I have had many thrills of achievement since that day, but none will ever compare to this one. It was the justification of all my hopes and all my trials. For days I could scarcely realize the great significance of that sentence. It affected me so deeply that I remember distinctly the shy manner in which I avoided meeting or speaking to this teacher; I feared that she might not have meant it or that she might learn how it had disturbed my emotions.

"Five years after that autumn, I received the diploma from this college, and two years after graduation the president of the college invited me to return as a member of his staff. I am frequently asked if it is possible to work one's way through college and what is required for the task. My reply is, 'Courage, a sound body, an unselfish love for knowledge, and faith.' One of the chief glories of America is that a young man or woman thus equipped need not be denied the opportunities of education."

Greensboro, North Carolina,

April 2, 1921.

### **PROFESSOR WILLIAM J. MARTIN**

Professor William J. Martin, President of Davidson College, writes:

"Let no young man or woman conclude that it is impossible to secure a college education because they are poor. If they are mentally able and have driving power sufficient to study under difficulties incident to working their way through, they can secure the opportunity—if not in one college, then in another.

"They should be students of at least fair ability and well prepared. They should have the testimony of those who know them that they are really in earnest and worth

investing in. If their character and purpose are such as to give promise of useful service, a way will open to them.

"I would suggest to all such as find it possible that it is wisest in the long run to finance the first year without having to do outside work, even though they have to borrow the necessary funds. The first year of college work is the hardest, and the student has less time to devote to outside affairs.

"Personally, I believe it is wisest and cheapest in the long run to borrow, if possible, for all college years sufficient funds to prevent the necessity for too much outside work. Some work will do good; too much will injure their education. After graduation one can rapidly pay up the debts.

"Ability, ambition, backbone, and pertinacity, with good judgment and good character back of them, will give them the chance and insure success as well."

Davidson, North Carolina,

April 7, 1921.

### SENATOR LEE S. OVERMAN

The Honorable Lee S. Overman, United States Senator from North Carolina, writes:

"I acknowledge the receipt of your highly esteemed favor of April 25th stating that you have planned to issue a little booklet telling something of your struggles in trying to work your way through Trinity College; I wish to congratulate you on this, as it will no doubt be of great encouragement to other young men who desire a college education and have not the means.

"Along in the seventies, when Trinity was a struggling college—as were all the colleges in the state at that time—many of the young men who were educated there were men whose parents had nothing; everybody was poor, and a great many of those young men had to work on the outside to pay for their education. They had a great struggle and worked their way through college by teaching during their vacation, and in other ways; and some of these men who actually did

menial work around the college have now become very prominent in the state. While I was fortunate enough to be able to pay part of my tuition and board, I was compelled to work and teach after my graduation in order to repay part of the debt I owed in obtaining my education. I can name several men who have attained great prominence in the state who worked their way through college. This should be an inspiration to other young men who are aspiring for an education and are too poor to pay for the same, to know that many of the public men of our state to-day who are now leaders worked their way through college, which fact is all the more credit to them and probably had much to do with their success in life."

Washington City,  
May 3, 1921.

### PROFESSOR J. C. PEERY

Professor J. C. Peery, President of Lenoir College, Hickory, says:

"To all who would make their mark in life, I give this advice:

"Your first step should be to secure a thorough education. If you have not sufficient money to pay your way through college, do not consider this a handicap; it may be to you a good fortune.

If you are willing to help yourself, a way can always be found. Any college is glad to have such a student and will help him.

"The effort put forth in working your way through college will be a valuable part of the training which will assure future success. If you have not the energy, the patience, and grit to work your way through college, you have not the qualities which will bring success in life. This, therefore, becomes not only the first step, but the test of your fitness for real success.

"Then, put away other plans and get an education. Do not take a short cut, and do not let anything discourage you. Success lies beyond.

"I myself not only paid all of my expenses through college, but had to work very hard to do so."

Hickory, North Carolina,

April 28, 1921.

### DR. WILLIAM LOUIS POTEAT

Dr. William Louis Poteat, President of Wake Forest College, gives some splendid suggestions:

"In reply to your letter of March 16, I am under the necessity of saying my father was able to finance my school career, so that I have nothing to send you of my personal experience for your chapter on working one's way through college. On the other hand, I have seen the thing done so often and have observed quite invariably the great advantage of it in toughening the fiber of character, in developing a wholesome respect for those who toil, and in laying the foundations of a serious and successful career, that I have no hesitation in recommending it to every young man of purpose and ambition.

"I agree with a distinguished dean of Columbia University, however, who was here a few days ago and who says that one good method for a man to work his way through college is to borrow the money and work it out after his graduation; the method does not interfere with class work during the college course, and it makes possible a larger compensation for work when it does come to be done. I think that any young man who is not able to finance his college course in any other way is amply justified in using this method.

"Of course, in the institutions located in cities, many jobs may be found which do not seriously interfere with college work. In institutions located in smaller communities, the number of such jobs is limited. A number of students in Wake Forest College are engaged in working their way

through. Many forms of work are open to them, and my observation is that no section of the student body is more highly respected."

Wake Forest, North Carolina,

March 22, 1921.

### DR. EDWIN D. PUSEY

Dr. Edwin D. Pusey, Superintendent of the Durham City Schools, says:

"By means of co-operative and part-time work, any boy or girl can work his or her way through school. At present, we have over forty boys in the white high school working their way through; in the colored school, we have about eighty pupils, mostly girls, working their way through. These pupils attend school part time and work the other, or else attend school one week and work the next week."

Durham, North Carolina,

March 30, 1921.

### DR. W. C. RIDDICK

Dr. W. C. Riddick, President of the State College of Agriculture and Engineering, West Raleigh, writes:

"I doubt if there is very much about my experience in getting an education to interest or inspire the youth of today. I can hardly say that I worked my way through college; in fact, in my day there was little or no opportunity for doing this. It is true, however, that I worked on my father's farm during vacations.

"Many times during my college course, I was thoroughly discouraged, and the credit for my remaining in college and completing my education is, I believe, due to my parents rather than myself, who were willing to make any sacrifices and always urged me to remain in college, no matter what hardships it entailed upon them. I, of course, had to practice

the strictest economy, and was frequently embarrassed by lack of money. In those days, however, practically all students with whom I came in contact were poor, and it was a struggle for them to remain at college.

"I have always hoped to see the day when every boy and girl will have the opportunity of just as much education as they are willing to take, and I believe that day has about come. With the numerous opportunities now offered for working one's way through college, and the help offered by the institutions in the way of loans, scholarships, and the like, I believe that any boy or girl who has real ambition and energy and who has fortitude to persevere against difficulty and hardships can secure an education, unless, as is sometimes the case, there is placed upon them the responsibility of supporting their families; and this is, to my mind, about the only valid reason that a young man of health and average mentality can give for not getting that education which will enable him to make the most of himself in his own behalf and in service to humanity. I urge all young people that, before they decide this most important matter, they consider it in the light of the future and not give up striving for an education unless they are sure that in the years to come their consciences will be clear that they did their duty."

West Raleigh, North Carolina,

April 19, 1921.

### DR. GILBERT T. ROWE

Dr. Gilbert T. Rowe, Editor of the "North Carolina Christian Advocate," Greensboro, writes:

"Trained minds will always direct and control in the affairs of the world. Occasionally and at rare intervals, there will appear a man who is able to get the necessary training without the aid of the schools; but in the great majority of cases, a course of study which affords instruction and intimate contact with the mature minds of teachers is indispens-

sable. Only about one leader in a thousand is wholly self-trained.

“The value of the records of men that have worked their way through college appears in two things. First, it shows that it can be done. All that a great many boys will need to know in order to make the attempt themselves is that it has been done. Second, after a boy has worked his way through school, he does not have to wait until he tries himself out in life to see whether he is going to succeed; he enters upon his life work conscious of the fact that he has already succeeded.

“This word is given quite humbly by one who doubts whether he would have had the determination and foresight to attempt what Professor Andrews and others have done, and rejoices with them in their achievement and also in the fact that they are pointing out the way for others to follow.”

Greensboro, North Carolina,

May 1, 1921.

### SENATOR F. M. SIMMONS

The Honorable F. M. Simmons, United States Senator from North Carolina, writes, with slight alterations, as follows:

“I am very glad indeed to know that you are to write a booklet telling the story of your successful efforts to obtain your present educational equipment. This story is sure to be inspiring and helpful.

“It has always seemed to me in my observation of men and affairs that education and knowledge are the strongest and most potent weapons when they are held by one who has had to fight for and win them through his own work and through a desire for them that would not be denied. We have had many notable instances of this type of man in the history of North Carolina.

“I hope that you will not forget to send me a copy of your booklet as soon as it becomes available for distribution.”

Washington City,

May 5, 1921.

## DR. S. B. TURRENTINE

Dr. S. B. Turrentine, President of Greensboro College, Greensboro, says:

"Three essentials to success are self-reliance, industry, and economy. The earlier these lessons are learned the better. About four-fifths of the successful citizens of our country are said to come from the working classes, the larger proportion of whom represent the rural sections. This fact is doubtless true because the three lessons mentioned can be more naturally taught and learned amid simple conditions of rural and village life than amid complex conditions of congested centers."

"Fortunate is the one who learns to 'bear the yoke in his youth.' While the youth 'born with the silver spoon in his mouth' can win success, yet such youth has more chances to fail, because his lot is adapted to dependence, idleness, and extravagance. The prime element of education is the development of native talent promoting true self-hood. The principle that work is a blessing is shown in the average success of the student whose motto is not love of ease. Any education that fails to teach the proper value and use of a dollar is defective, whether the student is rich or poor."

"The courage that wins in the work of life-preparedness is as praiseworthy as the heroism that wins in the work of life-service."

Greensboro, North Carolina,

April 25, 1921.

## PRESIDENT C. G. VARDELL

Professor C. G. Vardell, President of the Flora Macdonald College, writes:

"Your letter received, and I did work my way through college and seminary, both.

"My preparatory work was done at Oberlin College, at which place I was for some time janitor of one of the school

buildings, washing windows, sweeping, making fires, and carrying out ashes. As you possibly know, a large number of the young people at Oberlin do this type of work. My college is Davidson. At that time, there was very little opportunity for a student to do anything to help himself except the ringing of the bells, and this work always went to the seniors. However, I put in my summers at one kind of work or another. One of them was making the first catalogue for the Davidson College Library. I went from there to Princeton Seminary and ran a boarding club, thus making my own board.

"I will say that any live, wide-awake, willing boy or girl, who can raise enough money to pay expenses during the first year at college, will, with the assistance of the college and opportunities offered for self-help, be able to win through. The colleges are realizing more and more that their duty is to make men and women—and not money. They are, therefore, most unwilling to let any good material escape without the very best possible preparation for future work."

Red Springs, North Carolina,

March 26, 1921.

### DR. L. A. WILLIAMS

Dr. L. A. Williams, of the University of North Carolina, tells a true story:

"I am greatly interested in your letter of March 26, in which you propose to issue a little booklet outlining some of the ways by which a young fellow may work his way through college. As it happens, I fall under that category; and, in addition to that, I worked my way through high school also. I left home when I was fourteen years of age without a cent in the world and with no other resources than a healthy body, a strong constitution, more or less of intellectual ability, and a fixed determination to get a college education. I was successful in utilizing all four of these resources as means toward the accomplishment of my end, and in 1903 received my Bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College.

"In connection with this matter of a young fellow's working his way through college, I am often reminded of the famous statement of Elbert Hubbard in which he classified the requisites of the securing of an education as 'inspiration, aspiration, respiration, and perspiration.' The implication is that there is something highly poetic and romantic about this procedure. I should like to take this opportunity of saying very definitely that there is nothing romantic or poetic about working your way through college. There are times when it is a mighty prosy affair, and it takes all sorts of determination and persistence to carry the thing through. I somehow have a feeling that the last one of Elbert Hubbard's requisites is perhaps the most necessary of all — perspiration.

"In the course of my working my way through, I believe I made one very serious error. I worked so many hours caring for furnaces and working in a printshop that I found very little opportunity and had very little energy for entering into the college activities other than regular class work. I am very thoroughly convinced now that this was a mistake. I ought to have carried fewer courses if necessary and taken longer than four years to do my college work and have entered into the college activities outside of regular course work to a very much greater extent than I did. I often feel that one of the largest contributions to a young man's college education is found in the contacts which he establishes through extra-classroom college life. To be sure, there is the danger that a young fellow may overdo this side of his college career. I made the mistake of overdoing the other side. I can honestly say that, in the light of my experience, if I had the chance to start over, I should have no hesitation about taking five years, even six years, to complete my course requirements and spending more time in dramatics, debating, athletic, and musical activities.

"I don't know whether there is anything in the above statements which will be of any use to you; but if there is,

you are at liberty to use it as you see fit. Please be sure to send me a copy of the booklet when it is published."

Chapel Hill, North Carolina,

April 2, 1921.

### MR. J. NORMAN WILLS

Mr. J. Norman Wills, Chairman of the Board of Education of Greensboro and Secretary-Treasurer of the Odell Hardware Company, sends this thoughtful message:

"To every young man or woman, the one important thing in this world—and the next—is character. Upon it depends usefulness, standing, happiness, and destiny.

"The process of character formation is one of response to influences. To the young child, the influences of heredity and environment come unsought, leaving him without choice; but soon he may discriminate to a greater or less degree. To select the right influences, and to respond properly to them, will result in a strong, righteous character.

"No influence during the formative period is more potent than the school. The young man or woman who would derive the greatest good from this vital factor must not be content without a college course of the right sort.

"Here the power of discrimination must be exercised, and that institution selected which, by reason of its traditions, its courses of study, the character of its students, and, most especially, the personnel of its faculty, exercises those influences which appeal to young life to make of itself the very best.

"No doubt the young student contemplating a college course would feel it a great advantage if his parents could, and would, supply him lavishly with money, so he could attend the college which he would prefer—usually an expensive one—and have no care as to the bills; and would have every opportunity to engage in the numerous activities, and indulge in the numerous diversions, which are supposed to belong to college life. But would this comparatively easy jaunt through

college make for character? That student who, on his way to and through college, most constantly facing difficulties caused by poverty—what is his chance of attaining his important goal, as well as the ultimate one of making a success of, rather than in, life?

“The fact that he determines to overcome these difficulties, and to make every possible sacrifice himself, rather than to expect an undue degree of sacrifice on the part of others, indicates the spirit of true manhood and womanhood.

“Following this out means the development of those elements of strength which will result in the attainment of a worthy ambition—a life which will be a blessing to all whom it may touch, and which will bring happiness and true success.”

Greensboro, North Carolina,

April 14, 1921.

### PROFESSOR O. V. WOOSLEY

Professor O. V. Woosley, Sunday-school Field Secretary of the Western North Carolina Conference, Lexington, writes:

“My father, a Methodist circuit rider, had sent me through high school and had informed me that because of his limited salary and number of other boys and girls in our home, it would be impossible for him to help me further in my efforts to get an education. We were living out in the country, thirteen miles from a railroad, and there was nothing else to do but to rent some ground and raise cotton and corn. The corn went to feed the circuit rider’s horse, and most of the cotton went to pay the fertilizer bill. There was a living in this work—if the teaching of a little country school during the winter at twenty-five dollars a month for four months were added to it.

“One day, a hot day in August, about two o’clock in the afternoon, while the sun and the stinging worms were doing a big business, it occurred to me that what I needed was less fodder and more education. So emphatically I said to myself

out loud as I stamped my foot down in the loose ground:  
“ ‘I am going to college!’

“The following winter was spent in teaching a little country school and the following summer in selling fruit trees. When fall came, all available funds had been invested in expenses while canvassing, and no deliveries had yet been made. My Sunday-school teacher loaned me twenty-five dollars to get to college, and all bills were held in abeyance until the fruit trees were delivered. Two weeks during the first fall in college were spent in delivering my orders; in fact, every fall witnessed such a circumstance, for I was a fruit tree agent during the summers and a student and all sorts of an agent during the school terms. I represented various mercantile firms at the college during the week and on Saturdays went to the nearby city and sold goods by main strength and awkwardness.

“On graduation day, I had paid what I had borrowed from my beloved Sunday-school teacher, had paid all claims at the college, and had a gold watch and forty dollars in money. I had worked my way through college and cleared a bit of money. I felt mighty important. To get properly in my stride, I went back to selling fruit trees during the summers and teaching school during the winters till finally my teaching and supervising demanded all my time.

“Any boy can go through college if he will just let the stinging worms get after him on a hot day in August.”

Lexington, North Carolina,  
May 18, 1921.

### DR. JOHN C. WOOTEN

Dr. John C. Wooten, Presiding Elder in the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Church, Raleigh, says:

“I am glad that you have undertaken to make it plain to all young people that they can get a college education if they will. There is too much undeveloped talent in our state.

And something should be done regularly to discover and inspire these young folks.

"It is a magnificent task you have set for yourself, and I trust that this expression of your faith and work may cause many others to develop themselves in our schools and colleges. All ministers and educators should constantly seek and be finding these choice young people."

Raleigh, North Carolina,

April 13, 1921.

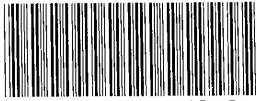
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